

MARTYRS TO MELODY

SOME GREAT MEN WHO HAD A STRONG AVERSION TO MUSIC.

Wolfe and Shantua Give Me the Music," said Sir Walter Scott. "Gautier called music 'the most disagreeable noise on earth.'"

Poverty, says some wise man, is no crime, but it is a great inconvenience. And insensibility to the concord of sweet sounds, it may also be said, though not criminal, despite Shakespeare's dictum that no man deaf to the appeal of music should be trusted, is certainly a very great deprivation. Yet, great and lamentable loss though it may be, it is a loss which has been the lot of a really extraordinary number of men and women, not merely among the rank and file of the world's workers and drones, but among those who have in various directions won distinction.

Even the poets have been divided on the subject, although one might naturally have imagined that felicity in verbal harmony would imply appreciation of music. Tennyson is reported to have remarked once to Sir Hubert Parry: "Browning is devoted to music and knows a great deal about it, but there is no music in his verse. I know nothing about music and don't care for it in the least, but my verse is full of music." In a general way the statement was very true and embodied a curious fact.

Coleridge, though he protested that he had no ear whatever and could not sing an air to save his life, yet delighted greatly in good music and, indeed, displayed excellent taste in his appreciation. He liked Beethoven and Mozart and some of the earlier Italian composers, such as Palestrina and Carissimi, and, much to his credit, loved our English Purcell. "Good music," he said, "never tires me nor sends me to sleep. I feel physically refreshed and strengthened by it, as Milton says he did."

On the other hand, Southey was insensible to the charms of music, a deprivation which was shared by Scott. In November, 1815, Sir Walter wrote to his friend Morritt of Rokeby that he was writing from a lonely fireside, his wife and daughter having gone in to Edinburgh to attend a great musical festival. "I have an indifferent good ear for a jig," he continued, "but your solos and sonatas give me the spleen, so I've remained behind to prune my oaks."

Scott, apparently, would have sympathized with Theophile Gautier, who once called music the most expensive noise on earth. Of Gautier it is also related that on one occasion when taken to task by a scandalized host for talking while some one was singing he replied, "Je ne supprime pas la musique, je me fais que l'écouter!"

A still more famous Frenchman, Victor Hugo, objected strongly to his dramas being used as librettos. He said the music spoiled his verses. Milton took a very different view. He was of soft Lydian aim.

Married to immortality, such as the melting soul may pierce, he agrees with many a winning voice of linked sweetness long drawn out.

The composer of the deep organ harmonies of "Paradise Lost" was probably one of the greatest music lovers in the ranks of the poets. He was a musician himself of no mean ability, and his love for the art stands revealed in many passages in his works.

Insensibility to music has been by no means confined to poets. A letter dated dual governor of Madras is said to have declared that there were only two tunes—one was "God Save the Queen" and the other "was not." He would have appreciated the remark of the Frenchman that music is "the only noise for which one is obliged to pay," a dictum with which Dr. Johnson would have cordially sympathized.

The doctor's remark at a violin performance is familiar. When a friend, smiling at great music's inattention to the dexterity displayed, remarked upon the difficulty of the performance to which they were listening, the doctor cried: "Difficult, do you call it, and I wish it were impossible!"

And when Boswell in a gushing fit described how music affected him so strongly and painfully, producing in his mind alternate sensations of pathetic dejection so that he was ready to shed tears and of daring resolution, so that he was inclined to rush into the thickest part of the battle, the doctor simply and effectively gave him a cold douche:—"Sir, I should never hear it if I made me such a fool!"

Yet Johnson once confessed to having been impressed by solemn music at a funeral, and on another occasion, when asked by a lady whether he was fond of music, he replied gallantly that he felt music he considered it the least disagreeable. Johnson even went so far as to ask his friend, Dr. Burney, the historian of music, to teach him the musical scale. "Dr. Burney," he said, "teach me at least the alphabet of your language." Imagination rather boggles at the idea of the lexicographer in the character of a music pupil.

Kamhi, again, although he numbered accomplished musicians among his friends, cared little for their melodies and continued to have practiced "God Save the King" all his life—"whistling and humming it over to myself in solitary corners and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it." On one occasion at the Novel he managed to "weather the Moroccan storm" with the aid of soothing water, but his power of musical receptivity was very soon exhausted, as he has explained in his own inimitable way in the "Chapter on Bars." Elsewhere he wrote:

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart, just as the wind blows; for my part I do not care a farthing candle

For either of them or for Handel. Cannot a man live free and easy without admiring Pergolesi, or through the world of wisdom go that never heard of Dr. Blow?

And Gluck and Beethoven, Bach and Weber and Purcell are disposed of in a similar light hearted fashion. A century earlier both Pope and Swift were equally unmusical. Swift, indeed, whose feelings were never half hearted about anything, hated the art. He cynically made mathematics and music the two chief pursuits of his absurd Laputians. He was at a club dinner one evening in 1711 and after much solicitation was at last persuaded to go into the music room. But he did not stay very long. "I was weary," he wrote to Stella, "in half an hour of their fine stuff and stole out so privately that everybody saw me and cooled my heels in the cloisters till after 10."—London Globe.

PENGUINS FEEDING.

The Change That Takes Place When They Enter the Water.

The appearance of the keeper of the penguins at the zoo, with his pall of live guano, is the signal for sudden and intense excitement in the cages. The penguins wave their little flippers and waddle to the door, whence they peer eagerly down the wooden steps leading to the pool. The cornucopia croaks and aways from side to side, and the darters poke their snaky heads and spread their battike wings. At the water's edge the penguins do not launch themselves upon the surface like other waterfowl, but instantly plunge beneath.

Once below water an astonishing change takes place. The slow, ungainly bird is transferred into a swift and brilliant creature, beaded with globules of quicksilver, where the air clings to the close feathers, and flying through the clear and waveless depths with arrowy speed and powers of turning far greater than in any known form of aerial flight. The rapid and steady strokes of the wings are exactly similar to those of the air birds, while its feet float straight out level with the body, unused for propulsion or even as rudders and as little needed in its progress as those of a wild duck when on the wing.

The twists and turns necessary to follow the active little fish are made wholly by the strokes of one wing and the cessation of movement in the other, and the fish are chased, caught and swallowed without the slightest relaxation of speed in a submarine flight which is quite as rapid as that of most birds which take their prey in mid-air. In less than two minutes some thirty penguins are caught and swallowed below water, the only appearance of the birds on the surface being made by one or two bounds from the depths, when the head and shoulders leap above the surface for a second and then disappear.

Any attempt to remain on the surface leads to ludicrous splashing and confusion, for the submarine bird cannot float. It can only fly below the surface. Immediately the meal is finished both penguins scramble out of the water and shuffle with round backs and drooping wings back to their cage to dry and digest.—London Spectator.

Two Portraits.

Doubtless many of our readers will remember the story of how Hogarth painted Fielding's portrait. We are told that the painter tried in vain to persuade the author of "Tom Jones" to sit for him and that Hogarth was unable to paint the face from memory. Mentioning this fact one day to Garrick, the great actor suddenly said, "Is this like?" So like to Fielding's was the face which Garrick made up that Hogarth seized his pencil and drew the portrait of the novelist which he has given to posterity.

Now, the French have an anecdote about the painting of the portrait of Voltaire on all fours with the short, Coulon, who united the offices of court jester and physician to Louis XVIII, was famed for his powers of mimicry. One day when Gros, the artist, was complaining that no portrait existed which did justice to Voltaire Coulon answered, "None shows the profound nobility of his character and his evanescent expression." While he spoke the words seemed to come from Voltaire himself, so like had the doctor grown to the minister. Gros hastily sketched and then painted Coulon's transformed face, producing the best sketch of the French statesman which, we believe, exists.—London Standard.

The Names of Reptiles.

Of the world frog we know nothing, although through the medium of many languages it has had as thorough an evolution as in its physical life. At one time or another it has been frog, frog, frog, frog, frog and tank, the latter an Icelandic word. We must admit our ignorance in regard to toad also, backward research revealing only tad, toad, toad and toad, the root baffling all study. Tadpole is delightfully easy. Old forms of the former word are pollywig, polowiggle and pollywiggle. The last gives us the clue in our spelling, pollywiggle, which reversed and interpreted in a modern way is wiggle head, a most appropriate term for these lively little black fellows. Tadpole is somewhat similar. Toadpool or toad's head is also very apt when we think of these small bodied larval forms.

Salamander is a Greek word of eastern origin, applied in the earliest times to a lizard which was considered to have power of extinguishing fire. Next has a strange history, originating in a wrong division of two words, "an ewie," the latter being derived from eft, which is far more correct than newt, though in use now only in a few places. This is an interesting example of word changes.—Outing Magazine.

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ESTATE OF ROSSETTA BROMLEY. January 2, 1906. Pursuant to the order of GEORGE E. BROWNE, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made on the application of the undersigned executor of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the subscribers under oath or affirmation their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from presenting or recovering the same against the subscriber. EDWIN WESTLAKE, Present claims to EDWARD GALE, Executor of the Estate, Newark, N. J.

FIGHTING POVERTY.

It Is That Struggle That Makes the Man.

The struggle to get away from poverty has been a great man developer. Had every human being been born with a silver spoon in his mouth—had there been no necessity put upon him to work—the race would still be in its infancy. Had everybody in this country been born wealthy, ours would be one of the dark ages. The vast resources of our land would still be undeveloped, the gold would still be in the mines and our great cities would still be in the forest and the quarry. Civilization, owes more to the perpetual struggle of man to get away from poverty than to anything else.

It is not poverty itself, but the effort to get away from it, that makes the man. We are so constituted that we make our greatest efforts and do our best work while struggling to attain that which the heart longs for. It is practically impossible for most people to make their utmost exertions without imperative necessity for it. It is the constant necessity to improve his condition that has urged man onward and developed the stamina and sterling character of the whole race.

A youth born and bred in the midst of luxury, who has always leaned upon others, who has never been obliged to fight his way up to his own loaf and who has been coddled from his infancy, rarely develops great stamina or staying power. He is like the weak sapling in the forest compared with the giant oak which has fought every inch of its way up from the acorn by struggling with storms and tempests. Power is the result of force overcome. The giant is made strong in wrestling with difficulties. It is impossible for one who does not have to struggle and to fight obstacles to develop fiber or stamina. "To live without trial is to die but half a man."

Strength of character is a thing which must be wrung out of obstacles overcome. Life is a great gymnasium, and no man who sits in a chair and watches the parallel bars and other apparatus ever develops muscles or endurance. A father by exercising for his son while he sits down will never develop his muscles. The son will be a weakling until he rises the dumbbells and pulley weights himself. How many fathers try to do the exercises for their boys while they sit on soft benches or easy chairs, watching the process! And still those fathers wonder that their boys come out of the gymnasium weak, with as soft and flabby muscles as they had when they entered.

The boy who is conscious that he has a fortune awaiting him says to himself: "What is the use of getting up early in the morning and working one's life out? I have money enough coming to me to take care of me as long as I live." So he turns over and takes another nap, while the boy who has nothing in the world but his own self to depend upon feels the spur of necessity forcing him out of bed in the morning. He knows there is no other way open for him but the way of struggle. He has nobody to lean on, nobody to help him. He knows that it is a question of either being a nobody or getting up and hustling for dear life. Thus shrewd nature in making man get that which he wants most by the way of necessity brings about her great ends of civilization and character development of the race. The money, the property, the position, are small things in comparison with the man she is after.—Success.

The Legend of Don Juan Manuel. Thomas A. Janvier in Harper's Magazine relates the legend of Don Juan Manuel, told as it was to him in the City of Mexico by a Mexican peasant: "This Don Juan Manuel, senior, was a rich and worthy gentleman who had the bad vice of killing people. Every night at 11 o'clock, when the palace clock was striking, he went out from his magnificent house—as you know, senior it still is standing in the street that has been named after him—all muffled in his cloak, and under it his dagger in his hand. "Then he would meet one in the dark street and would ask him politely, 'What is the hour of night?' And that person, having heard the striking of the clock, would answer, 'It is 11 hours of the night.' And Don Juan Manuel would say to him, 'Senior, you are fortunate above all men because you know precisely the hour at which you die!' Then he would thrust with his dagger. And then, leaving the dead gentleman lying in the street, he would come back again into his own home. And this bad vice of Don Juan Manuel's of killing people went on, senior, for a great many years."

Vitality of Trees.

An illustration of the wonderful vitality and reproductive power of the redwood is reported from Ukiah as existing in the forests of Mendocino county. It consists of the trunk of a redwood tree felled for the manufacture of shingles, which after lying on the ground undisturbed for several months sprouted a number of young trees, whose roots had developed in its own body.

Travelers through the coast forests have frequently observed the phenomenon of rows of well developed trees growing out of the bodies of those that have lain long enough on the earth to perish and decay. Some years ago a newspaper correspondent reported the strange phenomenon of new redwood growth on a bridge built of redwood logs across a Humboldt county stream. The sides of this bridge consisted of two large redwoods which had been rejected so that the ends rested in the soil on each bank. All along the upper side of each log a row of sturdy redwood saplings developed shortly after the bridge had been finished.—San Francisco Call.

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